

The gentleman from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) can throw his hands any way he wants, but the bottom line is we are at war with terrorists and we want to break into those cells and detect what is going on; and we sure as hell do not want to tell them we're coming.

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Let me first say I am troubled by the comments of the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS). To tell a New Yorker, to have a New Yorker hear that we somehow do not care for the victims of September 11 is really the cheapest kind of blow a Member can put on this House floor. I care and everybody else cares.

But in the process of caring for the victims of September 11, no one said we were supposed to throw away the Constitution of this country. If in fact we were attacked, as some people would propose, because we are different, if in fact we were attacked because we are a great democracy, if in fact as some people propose we were attacked because people hate our freedom and hate our way of life, then the one thing we have to make sure in defending ourselves and getting the bad guys is we do not harm the good guys and throw away the Constitution. That would be the biggest victory for the terrorists.

I know that the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) is not listening to us now, but I personally take great offense to the fact; and I am glad that the gentleman from Connecticut is now listening because I think that was a low blow. I knew people that died there. I was friends with people who died there. We all are. Everybody in this country became a New Yorker that day. That is a fact of life. From Oklahoma to Portland, Oregon to Miami, Florida, everybody became an American and a New Yorker that day; so do not mix one with the other.

The fact of life is that we are talking here about a very difficult situation. The FBI still has the right under the gentleman's amendment to look at what terrorists are reading and at what terrorists are doing. We want them to do that. We want them to do that. That is why we support the FBI's efforts. But what somebody else is reading which has nothing to do with terrorists, with an opportunity now to invade our privacy like we have never seen before in this country, that is not what this argument is about, and it should not be mixed that way. I think it is offensive to some of us who believe we can defend our country and protect our Constitution to be reminded every day that if we question this policy and if we question the PATRIOT Act, we are somehow un-American and not patriotic enough. No one should ever question us. I never question anybody's patriotism or their love for this country.

Now there is traveling around the possible threat of a veto. If our President wants to veto this bill that funds the FBI's effort against terrorism, that funds the embassy security for our men

and women who work overseas, that funds our war on drugs, that continues like in the homeland security bill, our fight on terrorism and the protection of our liberty and our system, let him veto it. Let the President explain it to the American people that he vetoed it because the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) wanted to make one small change.

My friends, the PATRIOT Act, and I must commend the leaders of this House, they are good at taking a bill that does just the opposite and calling it something that it is not. The PATRIOT Act is everything but the PATRIOT Act. It is probably the act that takes away a lot of our abilities to continue to be patriots, but that is another issue.

This bill is what it is. The gentleman from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is just trying to make it better. But I think my most important point here today is we should be careful what we say and how we say it because this is not the time to divide the country; this is the time to simply unite it.

Let me conclude my comments by reminding us of what one of our Founding Fathers, Benjamin Franklin, said: "They that give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety." That is our problem at the present moment.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I think one of the major issues, though, is this is something that should not be handled on the floor of the House in the heat of the moment with 20 minutes on each side. It is a serious issue.

Secondly, I was one of the Members who supported the 9/11 Commission. Thirty people from my congressional district died in the attack on the Pentagon. I think instinctively, no matter which side Members are on, they would want to wait until the 9/11 Commission. I know some have been critical of the 9/11 Commission. I have not. I have been supportive of it. We would want to see what the 9/11 Commission said; did they think this was a problem. I am sure that they are looking at it. We have been in contact with the 9/11 Commission on the reorganization of the FBI, so there are two issues.

We would want to wait to hear them, and we would also want to bring in the librarians, constitutional scholars, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and others to come and review with thoughtful consideration, rather than a heated debate with 20 minutes on each side.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS), chairman of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in opposition to this amendment. The PATRIOT Act is not designed to be a Draconian assault on our rights, despite the description some have given it. Rather, it is a necessary tool which allows for effective communication be-

tween law enforcement and intelligence agencies. Let me say that again: it is an effective communication tool between law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

Those of us who have studied what went wrong on 9/11 came up with a very dramatic conclusion which was published in a joint report put out by the House and Senate which said the problem was communication, there was a wall that needed to be taken down; and in fact the PATRIOT Act helped accomplish this, and it was a useful legislative contribution by the United States Congress as the legislative body to help fight the war on terrorism.

We have agencies that set forth every day in our country with the goal of keeping America safe. That is no small proposition these days. We have all read on the front page of the New York Times, the very New York Times the gentleman is referring to, that city we are all concerned about, the concerns about domestic attack, about right-now worries that there are things that should give us concern about our safety from terrorists, that their attention may very well be focused there. That has been reported on the front page of the New York Times.

The PATRIOT Act makes the task of dealing with these people and these threats a lot easier, and I continue to support the PATRIOT Act, and those who are working behind the scenes with our national security organizations do too.

We all know that no piece of legislation this body or any body produces is going to be perfect. We all know about unintended consequences. And so Congress has done something else. We have provided for oversight capability in case we got something wrong, and we have the capacity to investigate and correct any instances of misuse of the PATRIOT Act, just as we would in other cases where wrongdoing is alleged.

The Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, which I am the chairman of, regularly conducts oversight, and it has proven to be effective and reliable. To that end I have frequently described the Intelligence Committee when I make public speeches, which I do frequently, as the metaphorical 1-800 number for anybody who has concerns about abuses under the PATRIOT Act or any intelligence-related activities. The number to the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence has been and continues to be publicly listed and available to anybody who wants to call from around the world. If you have experienced a specific problem with the PATRIOT Act, you can now call us at our toll-free number. It only costs the taxpayers. The number is 1-877-858-9040. We will be happy to receive comments and exercise our congressional right to oversight as appropriate.

If there are problems with the PATRIOT Act, fine. Let us fix them in the kind of way that the chairman has properly suggested. I think the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) has